

VZCZCXRO8217

RR RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHSL #0600 3091643
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 051643Z NOV 07
FM AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1306
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0147

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRATISLAVA 000600

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/05/2012

TAGS: UNGA PHUM CU LO

SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA INTERESTED IN DECEMBER 10 US-EU CUBA EVENT

REF: A. SECSTATE 147620

1B. BRATISLAVA 595

Classified By: DCM Lawrence R. Silverman for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (SBU) Poloff delivered reftel A demarche to Zdenek Rozhold, MFA Director for Latin American Affairs and Miriam Joklova, MFA Deputy Director of the Human Rights Department. Each viewed the U.S. proposal as a constructive model for U.S.-EU action that could be more effective than forcing a vote at the UN. Joklova, in particular, appeared relieved that the U.S. was not going to introduce a Cuba resolution or call for a vote on the HRC package at the upcoming UNGA, which she viewed as a hopeless proposition.

12. (SBU) Rozhold wanted to know more about specific U.S. ideas regarding any actions or events planned for December 10, since he believed Slovakia could be actively supportive but wanted to know more about U.S. plans and the prospects for a general EU consensus before making commitments. He said that he hoped that the EU could agree to a joint U.S.-EU December 10 plan, but expressed skepticism that such an agreement could be reached by all member states, citing concerns from not only Spain, but also Italy and Belgium. While not making specific commitments, Rozhold emphasized that Slovakia was a strong supporter of the basic U.S. approach, adding that he was aware that Poland had taken a firm position in favor of the U.S. proposal and that Slovakia holds a similar view.

13. (C) Comment: Slovakia continues to support activities casting the spotlight on human rights abuse in Cuba; in October, MFA State Secretary Diana Strofova spoke at a NGO event to raise funds for Cuban political prisoners. Slovakia and Cuba have also been at odds recently over Cuba's lack of proper protocol in detaining and deporting a Slovak election observer during Cuba's recent elections (see reftel B). At the same time, however, Slovakia hopes to strengthen commercial relations with Cuba and Slovakia's Ministry of Economy is in the process of finalizing an economic cooperation agreement with Cuba (which Rozhold calls a continuation of past agreements), to be signed in early 2008.

While Slovakia will support the strongest possible EU (and joint U.S.-EU) position on Cuba, it is unlikely that Slovakia will take a leading role in a December 10 event unless several other EU states are also willing to visibly promote a joint U.S.-EU position. End Comment.

VALLEE